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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announce Dam Safety Program initiatives for Wright Patman Dam

FORT WORTH, Texas – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District officials met recently with affected water supply customers, water utilities and congressional stakeholders to discuss the Corps' plan to improve safety at Wright Patman Dam. The dam is not in imminent danger of failing, is currently performing its intended function and there are no plans to change the operations of the dam.

A risk informed screening process, which considers current dam behavior, how well the dam meets current design criteria, as well as the potential consequences of dam failure were recently conducted. The screenings classified the dam as having Moderate to High Risk characteristics. The Moderate to High Risk classification is a result of potential foundation seepage and piping and overtopping issues along with downstream consequences. Consequences include potential lives lost, economic, environmental, and other impacts.

"Wright Patman Dam is operating as designed but is approximately 56 years old. Therefore, we will continue to assess and ensure its safe operation," said Col. Richard J. Muraski, Jr., Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District.

The Fort Worth District operates and maintains 25 flood risk management dams in Texas providing approximately 35 percent of the quality water supply for the state. As part of the responsibility in managing these dams, the Corps has a comprehensive dam safety program that has public safety as its primary objective. Corps dams are routinely inspected and continually evaluated for safety in accordance with the Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety issued in 1979.

In 2005, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began performing Screening Portfolio Risk Analyses that considered both performance and consequence of failure (risk-informed screening), allowing USACE maintained and operated dams nationwide to be prioritized. Wright Patman Dam was screened in 2007.

"We will continue to keep our congressional leaders, stakeholders and public informed of our actions to keep the dam structurally sound for all Texans. Safety above all, is our number one priority," Muraski said.

Wright Patman Dam was placed into operation in 1956 and serves the citizens of Texas providing flood risk management, quality water supply, environmental stewardship and recreational opportunities. The Corps of Engineers tests, evaluations and subsequent required work are ongoing to ensure that the 56-year-old project will continue to safely provide these important services.

For more information contact the Public Affairs Office, 817-886-1306.

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